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SECURITY INFORMATION

NSC BRIEFING

29 October 1953

FRENCH ASSEMBLY INDOCHINA VOTE

1. Assembly on 28 October adopted by 315 to 251 government-supported motion calling for:

- a. Development of native armies to relieve French forces.
- b. Use of "every possible means" to reach a general peace in Asia by negotiation.
- c. Assurance of just distribution of effort and sacrifice among free nations.
- d. Continued adherence of the Associated States to the French Union.

2. Opposition to the resolution ~~apparently~~ ^{PRESUMABLY}

included:

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. II

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- a. 100 Communists.
 - b. 105 Socialists
 - c. A few Popular Republicans
 - d. The rest mostly Radical Socialists and Independents.
 - d. (It is unlikely that any ex-Gaullists voted against the motion.)
3. Before a vote on this motion, the Assembly had rejected several opposition proposals.
- a. By a 418 to 101 vote it rejected a Communist motion for immediate negotiations with Viet Minh.
 - b. A Socialist motion calling for an end to the war through negotiations was rejected by 330 to 250.
4. Laniel denied any intention of fighting for total victory.
- a. He assured the Assembly that France is willing to negotiate if the Viet Minh seek talks.

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5. As a result:

- a. The Reynaud faction in the cabinet has probably gained support for its demand for five-power talks. (In mid-October Laniel and Bidault successfully parried such a demand which probably had support of majority of ministers.)
- b. In any event, the Reynaud faction will insist on taking every opportunity to implement point two of the motion (negotiations).
- c. The Navarre Plan assumes even greater importance than heretofore.
 - (1) If Navarre succeeds, French hope Viet Minh will ask for negotiations.

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- (2) If Navarre fails, France will probably seek UN intervention or attempt to turn the responsibility for the conduct of the war over to the US on the threat of a complete withdrawal, even though the French have admitted that it is militarily infeasible to attempt such a withdrawal.

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